



Making connections. Informing solutions.

January Services Workgroup Meeting Agenda

January 14th, 2026

2:00-3:30PM

ZOOM

- 1. Welcome and Introductions**
- 2. CT Children's Behavioral Health Survey Updates**
- 3. Peer to Peer Study Overview and Findings**

Services Workgroup
January 14th, 2026
2:00 – 3:30 PM
ZOOM

TCB Services Workgroup Meeting Summary

Attendees:

Mickey Kramer
Jill Farrell
Erika Sharillo
Kris Robles
Aleece Kelly

Megan Berry
Paige Hammond
Kristen Parsons
Yann Poncin
Stephanie Bozak

Staff TYJI:

Emily Bohmbach
Stacey Olea

Agenda:

- ❖ **Administrative Updates**
- ❖ **CT Children’s Behavioral Survey Updates**
- ❖ **Peer-to-Peer Study Overview and Findings**

Meeting Summary:

1. Administrative Updates:

- a. The TCB Senior Project Manager shared updates from the January meeting, including a preview of potential 2026 legislative recommendations and a presentation to the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity on disordered eating behavior recommendations. The next meeting is scheduled for February 11th and will be streamed on the TYJI YouTube channel and CTN. Upcoming meeting dates for the Prevention, School-Based, and System Infrastructure workgroups were also reviewed.

2. CT Children’s Behavioral Survey Updates:

- a. A representative of the Innovations Institute opened with an update on the Connecticut Children’s Behavioral Survey and the broader data integration initiative. The scope of work has expanded beyond survey results to include multiple data sources, which are being consolidated into an interactive dashboard. The purpose of this effort is to create a comprehensive view of the current behavioral health service landscape and enable more detailed analysis across service areas.
 - i. The first version of the dashboard will be reviewed with the Service Array Subgroup, followed by consultations with subject matter experts to validate findings and identify additional data needs. The dashboard is intended to surface service gaps, highlight areas for further investigation, and guide strategic priorities. The overall goal is to strengthen data-informed decision-making and support clearer identification of system needs and opportunities for improvement.

3. Peer-to-Peer Study Overview and Findings:

- a. The TCB Senior Project Manager introduced the presenter by noting that peer-to-peer support was identified as a priority by the Services Workgroup following a February TCB meeting where the study was first presented.

- b. The presenter provided an overview of findings from a project focused on expanding family and youth peer support within Connecticut's children's behavioral health workforce. Building on the 2023 Children's Behavioral Health Workforce Strategic Plan and aligned with System of Care principles, the project examined national evidence, best practices, funding models, and Connecticut's current landscape. The speaker noted that the work included a literature review, interviews, focus groups, and a staff survey, all specific to children's services.
 - i. The presenter highlighted strong evidence that peer support improves engagement, treatment adherence, family functioning, and emotional well-being, while also reducing reliance on higher levels of care and improving equity in service access. Peer roles are distinct because lived experience is central to their function, with an emphasis on relationship-building, advocacy, and navigation. While Connecticut has strong training infrastructure and positive family feedback, peer roles are not systematically implemented statewide, youth peer positions are limited, and career pathways and supervision structures could be strengthened.
 - ii. The speaker also emphasized that sustainable funding remains a key challenge. Although many states reimburse peer support through Medicaid, Connecticut largely relies on grant funding, making programs vulnerable to disruption. The final report and recommendations are under review, and the presenter will return to share policy implications once they are finalized.

4. Q&A

- a. Participants asked how families and youth access peer support services. Presenters explained that referrals most often occur through clinical providers and care coordination programs, with organizations such as FAVOR serving as key contracted providers, though referrals may also come from schools, hospitals, probation officers, or families themselves. Peer support may function as a standalone service or be embedded within models such as wraparound, where family peer specialists participate in Child and Family Team meetings and often maintain relationships beyond the formal service period. The discussion emphasized the distinct yet complementary roles of family and youth peer-family peers support caregivers through navigation and advocacy, while youth peers engage young people directly to promote recovery, resilience, and life transitions. Participants raised concerns about limited youth peer workforce capacity. The presenters described a new pilot serving approximately 140 youth statewide and creating about 10 youth peer roles focused on adolescents with co-occurring substance use and behavioral health needs. Connecticut currently lacks a comprehensive youth peer training and certification infrastructure. Presenters confirmed that, as of 2020, 33 states reimburse peer support through Medicaid, with Connecticut's primary barriers relating to infrastructure and sustainable funding rather than policy opposition. Overall, the discussion underscored the value of peer support and identified Medicaid reimbursement and workforce expansion as key opportunities for growth.

The next Services Workgroup meeting is on February 25th, 2026 at 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM on Zoom